



National
Aeronautics and
Space
Administration

Endeavour to Help ISS Spread Its Wings



STS-97 crew (front, 1 to r): Pilot Michael Bloomfield, mission specialist Marc Garneau (Canadian Space Agency), and Commander Brent Jett. (back) Mission Specialists Carlos Noriega and Joe Tanner.

November 29- Space Shuttle *Endeavour* and its 5-member crew are set to soar into orbit on a mission of spaceflight firsts, including the task of adding a pair of giant solar wings to the International Space Station (ISS).

As of this writing, launch is set for Thursday, November 30. *Endeavour's* liftoff on mission STS-97 is targeted for 10:06 p.m. EST. (Launch window is under 5 minutes.)

"This mission will assemble the heaviest, largest, and most complex piece of the International Space Station to date," Space Shuttle Program Manager Ron Dittmore said. "Every shuttle flight for the next year carries its own set of firsts. But this mission, unfolding solar arrays of historic proportions, will make the challenge and grandeur of this entire venture more apparent than will any other single flight."

Endeavour will carry a 17-ton package of immense solar arrays and associated batteries, electronics, and cooling equipment. Once deployed, this first set of solar sails will measure 240 feet, tip-to-tip, and will provide

enough electricity to run 15 average-sized homes.

Astronauts Tanner and Noriega will perform space walks during the mission to install the giant solar panels and prepare for the arrival next year of the American-made space laboratory *Destiny*. Once in orbit, the *Destiny* module will be the most sophisticated science laboratory ever launched into space.

Endeavour will also be the first shuttle to visit the Expedition One crew which is currently working in orbit on ISS. Along with the technical equipment needed to attach the solar panels, the crew of STS-97 will drop off supplies and equipment for the 3-person station crew, led by American Commander Bill Shepherd and two Russian cosmonauts, Pilot Yuri Gidzenko and Flight Engineer Sergei Krikalev. The Expedition One crew arrived at the space station November 2 and will work onboard ISS for nearly 4 months.

For more information on ISS and Space Shuttle missions, see spaceflight.nasa.gov/

Combined Federal Campaign

The HQ Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) officially ended on November 24. Due to the generosity of many HQ employees, HQ had another successful campaign this year, exceeding our \$228,000 goal. Special thanks and appreciation go to each code's team leader and key workers for their hard work and dedication. The benefits of the CFC charities come back to all of us. Together we have made a difference.

HQ Holiday Reception
Come share the joys of the holiday season with friends and colleagues at the Exchange Council's Annual Holiday Reception December 19, 12 noon, west lobby. For details, call Lenore McGraw, 358-1444.

In this issue

- [IT News](#)
- [New ViTS Web Page](#)
- [Students Assist With Cassini](#)
- [Discovery Returns to KSC](#)
- [EO-1 Satellite Launched](#)
- [Breast Cancer Detection Probe](#)
- [Brian Welch, Gerald Soffen Obituaries](#)
- [New Office of Security Management & Safeguards](#)
- [HQ Daily Planner](#)
- [ISO 9001 Update](#)
- [Retirement: A New Way of Living](#)
- [Managing Your Career](#)
- [HQ Classifieds](#)
- [Exchange Council News](#)



Windows 2000/Office 2000 Coming Soon to a Desktop Near You

There's a lot of talk in the halls these days about this ODIN Tech Refresh—So what's it all about?

The ODIN Delivery Order is scheduled to begin the “refresh” (or replacement) of most of the hardware, including laptops and all peripherals, starting in the 3rd week of December. This refresh process is scheduled to be complete by the end of February 2001.

The refresh for the PC's will include the Windows 2000 Operating System with Office 2000; Macintosh computers will be upgraded to OS 9.04. Office 2001 for the Macs will be deployed at a later date. Individual surveys will be conducted on your workstation to make sure all existing applications are captured on your current equipment so that they can be installed on your new hardware.

We will keep you informed of the deployment schedule and status via IT Notices, IT Exchanges, *Heads Up*, and *HIT 25* advertisements. Information will also be posted and updated on the ODIN services web page at <http://odin.hq.nasa.gov/> Your IT Code Points of Contact (POC's) will also be advised to make this information available to you. In the meantime, here's a sample of some of the new features offered and what to expect that's new and different.

Windows 2000

You will now login to your computer using [CTRL][ALT][DEL]. During times away from the computer, you will now be able to lock (or password protect) your computer using [CTRL][ALT][DEL][L].

- **The Desktop**- The order and name of the desktop icons have changed as follows: My Documents; My Computer; My Network Places; and Recycle Bin.
- **Start Menu**- Windows Explorer has moved to the Accessories Folder.
- **Toolbars**- The Office Automation and Internet Tool Suite toolbar default location is at the top of the screen and toolbar colors are random.
- **My Documents**- The default “Save” location on the desktop for all files has changed from C:\Data to the “My Documents” folder. All files previously on the C:\Data directory will be transferred over to that location (C:\Data) upon migration. All NEW documents created will now be stored under My Documents.

Note: Eudora Attachments will still be saved under C:\Data\Attach.

Any documents that need to be backed up should be saved to one of the shared drives, since anything on the C:\ drive does not get backed up on a nightly basis.

Office 2000 New Features

- **Menus/Toolbars**- Menus and toolbars have been improved and are now easier to customize. A new customize arrow at the end of the toolbar will access a drop down list of buttons which can be added or deleted from the original toolbar by selecting/deselecting easy to use check boxes.

Menus have become intelligent and will modify themselves as you work, eventually adding features you use most often and removing features you've stopped using.

These options can also be turned off leaving things similar to the way they were in Office 97. Choosing Tools/Customize/Options/

Menus will show recently used commands first.

- **Internal Office Clipboard**- With this new Collect and Paste function you can now cut or copy up to 12 different selections of text to the Clipboard. A Clipboard toolbar is now available that allows these pieces of text in the Clipboard to be pasted in any order into either Word, Excel, or PowerPoint. Choose View/Toolbars/Clipboard. Once activated, this toolbar is available in Excel and PowerPoint and also contains a command to paste all items or clear the Clipboard.

To assist you with this transition to your new computing environment, the Computer Training Center (CTC) is offering an assortment of learning choices: 1-hour IT Exchanges, 3-hour workshops, or one-on-one deskside support. For additional training information, visit the CTC web page at <http://www.hq.nasa.gov/office/codec/codeci/ctc/ctc.htm> or call Carol Illeszky, 358-2454.

New ViTS Web Page

The NASA Headquarters Video Teleconferencing Service (ViTS) has a new web page to provide better service to its customers: <http://polaris.hq.nasa.gov/vits/index.cfm>

The Web page:

- Introduces the HQ ViTS Facility to users;
- Explains the benefits of video conferencing;
- Describes current available services;
- Offers tips on how to schedule, prepare for, and run a ViTS conference;
- Includes a new On-line Request Form for scheduling a video conference;
- Provides for comments and suggestions to help us to help you and serve you better.

Requesting a ViTS conference is now easier than ever with on On-line Request Form: <http://polaris.hq.nasa.gov/vits/request.cfm>

Conference requesters are strongly encouraged to use the Online Request Form, as it is a more efficient way of doing business.

For information about video conferencing, the new Web page, or to schedule a tour of the ViTS Facility (Rm. CD61), contact the HQ ViTS Coordinators, Fred Berger or Dennis Cooper, 358-0146, or e-mail vits@hq.nasa.gov

Students Steer Giant Telescope to Assist Cassini

Students at 25 middle schools and high schools in 13 states are remotely controlling huge radio-telescope dishes in the California desert from their classroom computers this fall and winter.

Their work will aid studies of Jupiter to be made by NASA's Cassini spacecraft as it flies past that planet. The students are using telescopes near Barstow, California, at the Goldstone tracking station of the Deep Space Network, which the Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL) in Pasadena, California, operates for NASA.

Students' monitoring of natural radio-wave emissions from Jupiter's atmosphere and radiation belts over the next few months will help with the interpretation of measurements that Cassini will take during a few days in early January.

The students' data will also be used to calibrate Cassini's radio gear for scientific studies to be conducted after the spacecraft reaches its main destination, Saturn, in 2004.

The telescope is the Goldstone-Apple Valley Radio Telescope, one of a group of large radio-antenna dishes at the Goldstone tracking station. Formerly used to communicate with NASA spacecraft, this antenna is now available for schools' use through a partnership of JPL, NASA, and the non-profit Lewis Center for Educational Research, in Apple Valley, California.

Discovery Returns to KSC



On November 3, the Shuttle Carrier Aircraft landed at Kennedy Space Center's Shuttle Landing Facility with a unique cargo—the Space Shuttle *Discovery*. At KSC, the orbiter will undergo preparations for its next launch, STS-102, scheduled for February 2001.

Earth Observing Spacecraft Launched

Two new Earth-orbiting missions, NASA's Earth Observing-1 (EO-1) satellite and the SAC-C spacecraft, were successfully launched on November 21 from Vandenberg Air Force Base in California.

EO-1's primary focus is to develop and test a set of advanced technology land imaging instruments. However, many other key instruments and technologies that will have wide ranging applications for future satellite development are also part of the mission. The SAC-C mission is a collaboration between the United States, Argentina, Brazil, Denmark, France, and Italy. It will study the structure and dynamics of the Earth's atmosphere, ionosphere, and geomagnetic field.

EO-1 is the first satellite in NASA's New Millennium Program Earth Observing series. The EO missions will develop and validate instruments and technologies for space-based Earth observations with unique spatial, spectral, and temporal characteristics not previously available.

EO-1 will be inserted into an orbit flying in formation with the Landsat 7 satellite taking a series of the same images. Comparison of these "paired scene" images will be one means to evaluate EO-1's land imaging instruments.



Smart Surgical Probe Follow-on To Fight Breast Cancer

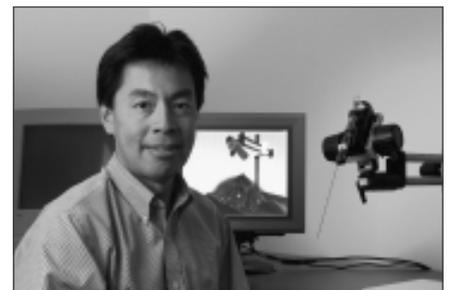
A Silicon Valley start-up company has obtained a license to develop, produce, and market an innovative diagnostic device for early breast cancer detection based on technology originally developed by NASA researchers.

San Jose-based BioLuminate, Inc., plans to develop a commercial version of the "Smart Surgical Probe" originally developed at Ames Research Center. The probe is a small disposable needle with multiple sensors. It has the potential to enable physicians to diagnose tumors without surgery, thereby dramatically reducing the number of breast biopsies that women undergo annually.

Further development of the smart surgical probe is focused on distinguishing cancer tissue types and obtaining real-time measurements. "The probe uses special neural net software developed at Ames that learns from experience.

This enables the instrument to detect the physiologic signs of cancer and may predict its progress," explained Dr. Robert Mah, the Ames scientist who invented the technology.

The breast cancer tool is being developed in collaboration with Stanford University School of Medicine, Stanford, California. It is a spin-off from a computerized robotic brain surgery "assistant" previously developed by Mah and Stanford neurosurgeon Dr. Russell Andrews. The larger brain surgery device is a simple robot that can "learn" the physical characteristics of the brain. It soon may give surgeons finer control of surgical instruments during delicate brain operations.



Dr. Mah with the "Smart Surgical Probe."

Obituaries

Brian D. Welch



The sudden loss of Brian Welch has deeply affected his many friends and colleagues throughout NASA. Brian, who served as Director of Media Services in the Office of Public Affairs, died on November 24, after suffering a heart attack. He was 42.

"All of us at NASA are stunned and saddened by this tragic loss," said NASA Administrator Daniel S. Goldin. "Brian's love and enthusiasm for space flight and exploration was infectious. He approached his job with a passion and a purpose and truly embodied the spirit of this Agency."

As Director of Media Services, Brian led many of the Agency's public outreach efforts. He was responsible for overall Agency news operations, NASA Television, and the Agency's Internet efforts.

A veteran public affairs officer, Brian began his NASA career as a public affairs cooperative education student at the Langley Research Center in 1979. In 1981, he moved to the Johnson Space Center, to become editor of the Center newspaper, the *Space News Roundup*.

In 1984, Brian became a public affairs mission commentator, providing real-time descriptions from the Mission Control Center during Space Shuttle flights. He also served as Deputy News Chief at the center, manager of the JSC mission commentary team, and newsroom manager during Shuttle flights. He served 10 months at NASA Headquarters as speechwriter for Administrator Goldin, before being appointed Chief of News and Information in 1994. He was named Director of Media Services in 1998.

Brian was a graduate of Murray State University, Murray, Kentucky. His mother, one brother, and one sister survive him.

"His passing is a tremendous loss for all of us," said Peggy Wilhide, Associate Administrator for Public Affairs. "Our thoughts and prayers go out to Brian's family, his many friends, as well as the many members of his extended family here at NASA."

A man of energy and humor, Brian is remembered by his colleagues for his many professional contributions and the way he cared about the people who worked with him.

"There is an awful lot I could say about Brian, but the thing that I remember the most about him was his (always) cheerful smile I really miss him." Tawana M. Clary, Code PO.

"For nearly 5 months, we worked side-by-side. I'm envious of the people who knew Brian for so many years. I feel as if I've been robbed of a good friend and the promise of a life-long relationship." Bob Jacobs, Code PM.

"As member of the NASA Public Affairs Team, it was a pleasure and a learning experience for me to work with and for Mr. Brian Welch." Fred Brown, Code PM.

"Can it actually be that Brian Welch has died? He was a caring, decent, hard-working person. He was, of course, much too young. Please pass on our shared sadness to his family and friends." Ned Potter, ABC News.

A memorial service for Brian is scheduled on Saturday, December 9, in his hometown of Fulton, Kentucky. There are plans

for a memorial at NASA Headquarters in Washington the following week. However, at this time details of the service are incomplete.

As a memorial, the Office of Public Affairs is collecting pictures of Brian, as well as handwritten notes or other items that represent the thoughts and prayers of those who spent so much time with him. The items are being posted on a bulletin board in the Newsroom and then will be organized in a scrapbook for Brian's family.

The Agency is also looking at other meaningful ways to honor Brian's memory and his passion for space exploration.

Dr. Gerald Soffen

NASA Scientist Dr. Gerald Soffen, who led the Viking science team that performed the first experiments on the surface of the planet Mars and a guiding force in NASA's effort to search for life in the Universe, died November 22 at George Washington University Hospital in Washington, DC. He was 74.

A close advisor to NASA Administrator Daniel S. Goldin, Soffen helped shape NASA's Astrobiology program, the study of life in the Universe. Soffen also was instrumental in the establishment of the NASA Astrobiology Institute, a virtual organization comprising NASA Centers, universities, and research organizations dedicated to studying the origin, evolution, distribution, and destiny of life in the universe.

"Dr. Soffen brought a vision and passion to space exploration that was remarkable," said Goldin. "His pioneering work on the Viking Missions paved the way for the creation of our astrobiology effort. Gerry's lasting legacy to us is he helped usher in a new era of discovery that will bring a new understanding of fundamental life processes on Earth and throughout our Universe."

Soffen served as project scientist of the Viking Mars Project while at NASA's Langley Research Center. Viking 1 landed on Mars on July 20, 1976, with Viking 2 following less than 2 months later.

Soffen joined NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center in 1983 where he helped to establish the Mission to Planet Earth program and served as the Project Scientist for the Earth Observing system at its beginning. Soffen formed the University Programs Office



at Goddard in 1990, and for the past 10 years he directed activities and programs designed to maintain and broaden the Center's interaction with the university community.

"Science and students were his loves," said Goddard Space Flight Center Director Al Diaz. "He was one of the finest scientists I have had the pleasure to work with. He was a brilliant researcher, but what made Gerry really special was his lifelong passion for sharing his extraordinary knowledge with young people. The Agency and the nation will continue to benefit enormously from the talented young people he has brought into the scientific community."

In 1993, Soffen created the NASA Academy, a unique summer institute of higher learning whose goal is to help guide future leaders of the space program. Introduced at Goddard, the NASA Academy is also active at the Ames Research Center and the Dryden Flight Research Center.

"Gerry was a good personal friend and a scientist who had a profound dedication to Astrobiology and space science in general," said Dr. Ed Weiler, Associate Administrator for Space Science. "He has provided distinguished service to the Office of Space Science, to NASA, and to the public. Gerry spent a lot of time working with young students and I know he enjoyed that enormously. We will all miss Gerry a great deal."

Soffen worked at NASA for 30 years. He started his career at the Jet Propulsion Laboratory where he managed biological instrument development at the Pasadena-based facility. He also was the Principal Investigator for the proposed Mars Microscope. Later at Langley, Soffen served as the Chief Environmental Scientist, and in 1978, he was named the Director of Life Sciences at NASA Headquarters.

Soffen was born in Cleveland, Ohio, on February 7, 1926. He received his Ph.D. in Biology in 1961 from Princeton University. He earned his master's of science degree from the University of Southern California and bachelor's degree from the University of California, Los Angeles. He is survived by his wife, Kazuko, and a sister, Nancy Guy, who lives in California.

New NASA Office of Security Management & Safeguards Established

NASA has established a new organization, the NASA Office of Security Management and Safeguards, to focus and advance the Agency's efforts in all aspects of NASA security.

The new office will formulate policy for and ensure the effectiveness of NASA's primary security objectives: to protect the Agency's employees (including on-site contractors) and visitors, as well as its critical national assets, vital information and physical property. The new organization, which reports directly to NASA Administrator Daniel S. Goldin, will serve as the single point of focus on security matters for the Agency and also will represent NASA at the national level on security policy.

"The creation of this office demonstrates, once again, our steadfast commitment to safety overall and also to properly safeguard the priceless human, intellectual and physical assets entrusted to us by the people of the United States," noted Goldin.

The establishment of the office results in part from assessments requested by Goldin to ensure the effectiveness of NASA's security programs in light of constantly evolving security and safety challenges.

John D. Schumacher, Associate Administrator for External Relations, will continue in his current capacity and also serve as acting director of the new office while a search to fill the position permanently is conducted.

HQ Daily Planner

December 4- L&R Jewelry, 10 a.m.-2 p.m., west lobby.

December 4-18- Toys for Tots drive, east and west lobbies. Karen White 358-1056 (see page 8).

December 4-19- Holiday Weigh-in Contest. Rita Moore, 358-2077 (see page 8).

December 4-20- Salvation Army Food Collection, east and west lobbies (see page 8).

December 4 and 5- Robbie's miscellaneous items, 10 a.m.-2 p.m., west lobby.

December 5- Financial and Resources Management Training Stand Down, 8:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m., auditorium.

December 5- VanDam art, 10 a.m.-2 p.m., west lobby.

December 6- FEHB Open Season Health Fair, 10 a.m.-2 p.m., west lobby. Scott Howell, 358-1558.

December 7- Phone Service Day. Vendors include AT&T, Cellular One, MCI World Com, Sprint PCS, and Verizon Wireless (formerly Bell Atlantic). 10 a.m.-2 p.m., west lobby. Susan Burch, 358-0550.

December 8- BJE leather goods, 10 a.m.-2 p.m., west lobby.

December 11- Murtats African American items, 10 a.m.-2 p.m., west lobby.

December 12- Maryland General Hospital Mammogra-

phy Unit returns to HQ, 9:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m. For an appointment, contact the Health Unit, 358-2600.

December 12-13- Exchange Council Book Fair with Books Are Fun, 10 a.m.-2 p.m., west lobby. Lenore McGraw, 358-1444.

December 14-15- Santa Fe Jewelry, 10 a.m.-2 p.m., west lobby.

December 14-15- Carol's Crafts, 10 a.m.-2 p.m., west lobby.

December 19- Holiday Reception, 12 noon, west lobby. Lenore McGraw, 358-1444. (see page 1).

December 20- Baglady Boutique, 10 a.m.-2 p.m., west lobby.

December 20- DCL Associates, 10 a.m.-2 p.m., west lobby.

December 21- Murtats African American items, 10 a.m.-2 p.m., west lobby.

December 25- Holiday—Christmas.



January 1, 2001- Holiday—New Year's Day.

January 16, 2001- Heartsaver Adult CPR class, 1-4 p.m., MIC 6-B. Register by January 9. Health Unit, 358-2600.

Corrective Actions and You

by Marcietta Swilley Washington, HQ CPAS Manager

Many hours have gone into the development and implementation of the ISO 9001 based Quality System at NASA Headquarters. Office work instructions (OWIs), Headquarters Common Processes (HCPs), and other procedural guidelines have been established documenting how we do what we do at Headquarters. DNV, Inc., the external ISO 9001 auditors, have certified that we are operating a management system that is in control. This simply means that we are doing what we say we are doing regarding Headquarters processes for key products and services and that we can prove it.

With this accomplished, what is the benefit to the average NASA Headquarters employee? One very valuable result is that there is now a closed-loop PROCESS to handle any problem within our system. Does this mean a new Headquarters complaint department or an employee suggestion program? Not exactly. It means we have a systematic approach to address problems and deficiencies in the way we operate at Headquarters. This closed-loop process means not only will problems be identified and a plan proposed to correct the problem, but also that the plan will be implemented and later verified for its effectiveness. Two automated systems have been developed which will help you report issues you want investigated. They are the Quality System Deficiency Notice (QSDN) and the Customer Complaint/Internal Problems (CCIP) systems. Both systems can be accessed through the HQ ISO 9001 Home Page located at hqiso9000.hq.nasa.gov

The first system, the QSDN, allows you (or any NASA Headquarters employee) to submit for review a problem that you are having with a HQ product, service, or process that is beyond the responsibility of your code. The HQ Corrective and Preventive Action System (CPAS) Manager reviews each QSDN submitted to determine whether there are indications that a corrective action may be warranted. The CPAS Manager confers with you and the representative of the office where you detected the issue to determine whether a corrective action should be initiated. If corrective action is warranted, the responsible organization must conduct a root cause analysis and develop a corrective action plan to eliminate the problem. Following implementation of the corrective action, the CPAS manager will verify whether the action taken was effective in eliminating the cause. You will be informed of the status of your submission throughout the corrective action process.

The CCIP is used WITHIN your code to handle problems that you identify with a product, service, or process that isn't handled by any existing process. Some existing processes currently provide you with the mechanism to register a problem. These problems need not be submitted in the CCIP system. However, they must be handled in a closed-loop manner, where the corrective action is implemented and its effectiveness verified.

If there is no existing process, you may submit a CCIP that will ensure effective handling of an internal problem. Each CCIP submitted is reviewed by your code's CPAS representative, in consultation with you and any other responsible parties, to determine whether your code should initiate corrective action. If corrective action is warranted,

it is assigned to someone in your code who must conduct a root cause analysis of the issue and develop a corrective action plan that will eliminate the cause from recurring. Following implementation of the corrective action, your code's CPAS representative will verify whether the action taken was effective in eliminating the problem. You will be kept apprised of the status of your submission throughout the corrective action process. Whether by an existing process or the CCIP, it is required that your problem be adequately addressed such that it does not recur.

In addition, if you receive a complaint concerning a HQ product, service, or process from external or internal customers, it must also be handled by the CCIP, if there is no existing process in place. External customers are those organizations external to NASA, such as the Administration, Congress, Office of Management and Budget (OMB), or General Accounting Office (GAO). They may identify issues that ARE labeled customer complaints.

Internal customers, such as the NASA Administrator, HQ codes, and any of the NASA Centers, identify what we call internal problems. This differentiation is made to ensure we recognize and track the concerns of our external customers versus our internal operations. If a customer expresses an issue or concern to you, it is your responsibility to enter it into the CCIP for tracking and resolution.

So, all this hard work has not been done in vain. You can affect the effective operations of all Headquarters processes by taking the opportunity to make improvements through the use of the QSDN and CCIP systems.

We passed the ISO 9001 registration audit and we are certified. Now what?

Retirement: A New Way of Living

How do you have fun in retirement? How do you balance your life? What can you do to deal with the change and the emotions? Harriet Hughes, AARP, will help you with the answers to these and other questions on Wednesday, December 13, 11:30 a.m., Rm. 4D33.

Harriet is a retired Federal Executive with advanced degrees in Psychology and Public Financial Management. She is a member of the Virginia State Leadership Council for AARP and Secretary, International Alliance. To register, contact Evelyn Saxinger, 358-1311 or e-mail esaxinge@hq.nasa.gov

Practical Tips for Test Taking and Exams

Elizabeth Piper, Career Counselor, Career Management Office

As the holidays approach, so does the exam season, marking the end of fall semester courses. If you experience anxiety, you are not alone! When asked, the majority of adult students admit to some degree of examination “jitters” or anxiety. There is nothing abnormal to responding this way. After all, we are being evaluated, and our final grade may depend on our exam results.

A moderate amount of anxiety has been found to improve test performance by motivating us and helping us to keep focused. However, too much anxiety can have a detrimental effect on our test performance and our health. Since these exams stand between us and our goals (our dreams, even), we must learn to cope effectively by training ourselves to clear these hurdles.

First and foremost, we can prepare ourselves intellectually. One week before the exam, it’s a good idea for us to intensify and expand our after-class review. We can also make lists and study definitions, principles, theories, ideas, concepts, or whatever the key topics of the course happen to be, and we can try to anticipate some of the questions we feel the instructor could ask. If some of the areas in the course content have been a challenge to us, now is the time to talk to the instructor and get some help. It is extremely important that we find out whether the test will be an essay or multiple choice test, for that will influence the way we study and how we approach the exam itself.

Multiple-choice questions are used to assess our grasp of basic subject information. They test our learning by calling upon a memory retrieval process called *recognition*. If we have learned anything at all in the course, our memories could be jogged and prompted into recognizing the correct response. The key to success on multiple choice tests is in-depth study, for they stress our factual detailed knowledge. Superficial familiarity can cause our memories to incorrectly identify the “correct” response or responses. In order to maximize our scores, we should pay close attention to the directions, especially words such as *either, or, choose, one, or more*. It’s a good idea to ask our instructor ahead of time for some information on the scoring formula.

Do some questions carry more weight than others? If so, we may want to spend more time on these questions. Are we penalized for guessing (meaning the number of wrong answers are deducted from the number of our right answers)? If so, we would be advised to guess with caution, and leave questions blank if we absolutely do not know the answer. If we are not penalized for guessing, then we should certainly make sure we answer every question.

When it comes to essay or short-answer fill-in-the-blank questions, the memory process we use is *recall*. This places a greater demand on our memory and demands a higher degree of subject mastery, for we are literally faced with a blank sheet of paper. Nothing is suggested to us and we are asked to write on a topic recalling completely from our memory. The primary purpose of an essay question is to assess our capacity to tie together or make connections among concepts and key pieces of information taught by the instructor. So we should analyze the question carefully and respond thoughtfully and analytically, using our critical thinking skills and demonstrating our grasp of the subject matter. Again, in order to maximize our grade, we must note carefully the directions such as *compare, contrast, describe, illustrate, etc.* and whether we are to explain someone else’s theory or give our own interpretation. We should make a brief outline for our essay response and use that outline as a guide to make sure we cover all key points and to make sure we develop our response logically and concisely. Finally, we must be careful to make our writing as legible as we can and be as accurate as possible in spelling and punctuation for it can boost the grade assigned to us by the instructor.

Information in this article is based on suggestions found in the book “Going Back to School — College Survival Strategies for Adult Students” by Frank J. Bruno, Ph.D. The book contains straight talk on test taking and much more for adults starting or returning to college. If you would like to borrow a copy of this book, visit the Career Management Office Library or contact Elizabeth Piper, 358-0565, or e-mail epiper@hq.nasa.gov

KSA ‘Korner’

Are you planning on writing or updating your KSA’s (Knowledge, Skills and Abilities) a.k.a. KSAOC’s (Knowledge, Skills, Abilities and Other Characteristics) any time soon? How else will you convey your ability to succeed if you don’t “toot your own horn” and convey previous accomplishments?

When incorporating accomplishments in your KSA’s, you are establishing your “track record” which can act as a predictor of how you are likely to perform on future jobs. When writing about specific situations, projects, or duties illustrating that you possess the KSA’s, consider incorporating accomplishment statements following the “CCAR” model. The acronym CCAR stands for *Context, Challenge, Action and Result*.

When addressing *Context*, you would write about the individuals/groups you worked with or environment you worked in. Next, you would address the specific *Challenge* and what *Action* you came up with to meet this particular challenge. Finally, you would explain the specific *Result*.

For more tips and strategies in writing Federal applications, resumes, and KSA’s call Elizabeth Piper, 358-0565, or e-mail epiper@hq.nasa.gov

HQ Classifieds

For Sale

Pokemon Cards, Set of 700 cards, including 23 holographic cards. Excellent condition. \$75. Call Ed, 410-266-5487.

For Rent

Condominium, SW, Washington, DC. 1 BR, on Potomac River, near HQ and Metro, \$1,200 per month, parking, utilities, basic cable, outdoor pool, W/D, LR/DR, kitchen. No pets, security deposit, 1-year lease, December 1 availability. Call Charles P. Warr. Daytime: 301-827-4721. Evening: 202-265-4545.

Notices

Thank You

Many thanks to my NASA family for your

support after the death of my mother. Special thanks go to Code A and the African-American Advisory Council. I was deeply touched by the many cards and flowers. It's an indescribable feeling to know that you're loved and appreciated in the workplace. - Bridget Fenner

Thank You

I would like to thank all of my many friends at NASA for the support, phone calls, cards, and words of encouragement during the passing of my mother. It was a very difficult time for me, but with your help I was able to move forward. God bless you all and thanks for everything. — Darlene Boykins

HQ Bulletin Submission Deadline

Articles must be submitted by close of business Friday, December 22 to be considered for the January 10, 2001 edition of the *HQ Bulletin*. For the publication schedule, see www.hq.nasa.gov/hq/bulsched.htm

HQ Bulletin

Editorial Staff

Mary Fenton

Ken Suslowitz

(202) 358-4817

(202) 358-2299

Send articles, ads, questions, or suggestions to InfoCom, e-mail: infocom@hq.nasa.gov; fax number: 358-3025; and mail code: CI-3.

The *HQ Bulletin* is produced by InfoCom of the HQ Information Technology & Communications Division.

www.hq.nasa.gov/hq/infocom.htm



Please recycle this publication
Federal Recycling Program

Exchange Council News

Book Fair December 12-13

Select books and gift items for the holidays at the Books are Fun sale on December 12-13, 10 a.m.-2 p.m., in the west lobby. Choose from best sellers; sports, reference, gardening books; cookbooks; and educational books and items—all at prices 30-70 percent lower than retail. For details, contact Lenore McGraw, 358-1444.

Exchange Store Holiday Special

Stop by and see the new gift items for the holidays. You can also enter the drawing for a chance to win a holiday reindeer. For every \$10 spent in the store, you get a chance to enter the drawing. The winner will be announced at the Holiday Reception on December 19.



Food and Toy Drives

- **Salvation Army Food Collection (December 4-20)**- Donate canned and non-perishable food items. Be sure items are unopened and have not passed their expiration date.
- **Toys for Tots (December 4-18)**- This drive is being held in conjunction with the Marine Corps Toys for Tots Foundation. Donate new toys in original packaging. For details, contact Karen White, 358-1056.

Place your donations in the boxes in the east and west lobbies.

Holiday Weigh-In Contest

Collection containers have been distributed to each single letter code and prime contractor. The organization collecting the most coins in weight will win the traveling trophy. The contest begins on December 4, and all containers are due in the west lobby for "weigh-in" on December 19. The winner will be announced at the Holiday Reception, December 19. For details, contact Rita Moore, 358-2077.

Halloween at Headquarters

The annual Headquarters Halloween event was a "hoot" as usual. The "Most Original" prize went to Dan and Mary Ellen McGrath as the "Trouble in Pair-A-Dice," and Paul Brundage, "One Foul Ball," followed up as the "Funniest" costume. And to get everyone in the Halloween mood, the Exchange Council sponsored the "Scary Movie" event in the "Bates Hotel" in the west lobby.



Dan and Mary Ellen McGrath.



Ann Stein.



Chris Jedrey.



Halloween contestants take a bow.



Paul Brundage.